

Groundwork
OHIO



Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies: **Extending Medicaid Postpartum Coverage**

Healthy moms are the foundation of healthy children. Whether infants are born healthy and with the potential to thrive as they grow greatly depends on their mother's well-being. To have a healthy pregnancy and positive birth outcomes, women and their infants require access to appropriate health care services before, during, and after birth. Our state Medicaid program is available to pregnant women in families with income up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. However, women in Ohio with pregnancy-related Medicaid coverage currently lose their benefits 60 days after the end of pregnancy. Ohio's rate of maternal mortality is rising, and a growing body of evidence shows that many of these deaths, particularly from preventable causes, occur after pregnancy-related Medicaid coverage ends.

More than

1/2 OF OHIO BABIES

are born to women who
RECEIVE MEDICAID.

Approximately
1 IN EVERY 3

PREGNANCY-RELATED DEATHS
happen 1-week to 1-year postpartum.¹

Extending Medicaid coverage can help eradicate preventable maternal deaths and improve health outcomes for both mom and baby.

As the largest payer of maternity care in Ohio, covering over half of births, Medicaid has a critical role to play in ensuring healthy moms and babies. Ohio needs to ensure that all individuals whose pregnancies are covered by Medicaid can keep their Medicaid coverage for at least one year postpartum, including coverage for services such as case management and outreach, substance use disorder treatment, and mental health screening and treatment.

EXTENDING POSTPARTUM COVERAGE....

Ensures continuity
of health care for
women postpartum.

Reduces stress
of finding new insurance,
changing providers or
navigating financial hurdles.

**Promotes healthy
development**
for baby &
avoids trauma.

Provides women flexibility
to focus on family, maintain
their health, & make plans to
return to work or school.

Supports behavioral health
& substance use disorder treatment
to keep mom healthy &
engaged in parenting.

Recommendation to Extend Postpartum Coverage for Medicaid-Eligible Pregnant Women

Extending the postpartum coverage period at the state level typically requires state action and budget authority. In the last biennial budget, the Ohio Department of Medicaid secured funding and permission to seek a Section 1115 waiver to extend postpartum coverage for a small target population of 2,500 mothers with substance use disorders. Due to the pandemic, this project was paused to address the increased demand for Medicaid coverage.

Between 2008 & 2016,

57% OF
PREGNANCY-RELATED DEATHS
in Ohio were considered preventable.²

BLACK WOMEN IN OHIO
are over **2.5 TIMES** MORE LIKELY
to die of a pregnancy-related condition
than white women.³

The federal American Rescue Plan Act grants states the ability to extend postpartum coverage to 12 months after birth for all Medicaid-eligible women without going through the Medicaid waiver process.⁴ The Ohio General Assembly should include language in the FY22-23 budget to allow Medicaid to take action to extend postpartum coverage to 12 months after birth without additional legislative approval. This extension will allow all birthing people who receive Medicaid coverage to have access to the care they need post pregnancy.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

*Ohio must support healthy moms and healthy babies
by extending postpartum coverage to 12 months
after birth for all mothers on Medicaid.*

SOURCES:

1. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- 2 & 3. [Ohio Department of Health](#)
4. [Kaiser Family Foundation](#)

GroundworkOhio.org

4041 N. High Street, Suite 204 • Columbus, Ohio 43214
Groundwork Ohio is a fiscally-sponsored project of Community Initiatives



@GroundworkOhio